

NOTES AND NEWS.

DR. ADOLF BERNHARD MEYER, an Honorary Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union, died in Berlin February 5, 1911, at the age of 71 years. He was born in Hamburg in 1840, and received his education as physician and naturalist in Berlin. In 1874 he was appointed Director of the Royal Museum of Zoölogy, Anthropology, and Ethnography at Dresden, which position he held for thirty-two years, resigning from it in 1896. He spent a number of years as a successful explorer and collector in the Eastern Archipelago, passing three years (1870-73) in the Celebes and visiting New Guinea and the Philippine Islands, this expedition resulting in his great work 'On the Birds of Celebes and the Neighboring Islands,' published in two quarto volumes in 1898, in joint authorship with L. W. Wiglesworth, his English assistant in his explorations (reviewed in this journal, XVII, Oct. 1900, pp. 399-401). His principal other general ornithological work was his 'Abbildungen der Vogel-Skeleten,' in two quarto volumes with over 200 plates (1879-97), but his minor ornithological papers are very numerous, many of them important, and all characterized by care and accuracy. He also published many anthropological papers, based largely on his work in the Eastern Archipelago. He was also an able museum director and greatly advanced the growth and efficiency of the Dresden Museum, so long under his management. His invention of the famous 'Dresden Case,' of glass and iron, after long study, has met with wide approval, it having been adopted in many other museums. His later years were devoted to linguistic and anthropological research. His scientific attainments won for him wide recognition, he having been made an Honorary or a Corresponding Member of a large number of the learned societies and academies of the world.

READERS of 'The Auk' will be interested in the following editorial statement that will appear in the October issue of 'Bird-Lore' respecting the long-continued illness of Mr. William Dutcher, formerly for many years the zealous and efficient Treasurer of the A. O. U., who was stricken with paralysis in October, 1910 (see *antea*, p. 151):

"On October 15, 1911, a year will have passed since the National Association of Audubon Societies was robbed by illness of the guidance and counsel of its President and Founder, William Dutcher. During this period, Mr. Dutcher has lain helpless and speechless at his home at Plainfield, New Jersey. His mental faculties, at first dimmed by the blow which fell so suddenly, were subsequently restored to him, and he not only recognizes, but welcomes gladly, those of his friends who are privileged to see him.

"As the leader of a great movement, the remarkable success of which is due to his untiring, unselfish, broad-minded efforts more than to those of any other man, Mr. Dutcher won the admiration and respect, not only

of his friends and associates, but even of those whom he felt it his duty to prosecute for violations of the law to the support of which his life is pledged.

"Deserving, however, as he was of the place he filled while in the full enjoyment of health and during a life of extraordinary activity, he never was more worthy the esteem of the friends or foes of bird protection than at this moment when, with almost more than human fortitude, unbroken by a year of sore trial, he faces the future with the patience and courage of a truly brave man."

NOTWITHSTANDING some unexpected delays, and a shorter time for the work, than was anticipated, the ornithological results of Mr. A. C. Bent's (see *antea*, p. 292) expedition to the Aleutian Islands were important in the amount of material obtained and in opportunities for field work. A delay of three weeks at Seattle, Washington, gave opportunity for collecting a good series of the local birds, including three specimens of the rare Northern Spotted Owl. Another delay in starting for the north prevented the expedition from reaching Unalaska till June 4, and its vessel, the U. S. Revenue Cutter 'Takoma,' was detailed early in July to the Bering Sea patrol. This left only a little more than three weeks in which to make the 1600 mile trip out to Attu Island and return. During the trip, however, collections were made at Akim, Amaknak, Unalaska, Atka, Kiska, Attu, Tanaga, and Adak islands, four or five days being spent at each. About 200 specimens of Ptarmigan were obtained (among them a new form), and good series of the land birds, including two species, Asiatic stragglers, new to the North American list, and one specimen of the rare Fisher's Petrel. On July 3, Messrs. Bent, Beck, and McKechnie sailed north on the gasoline schooner 'Polar Bear,' leaving Wetmore at Unalaska to visit Unimak Island and then work slowly homeward along the south side of the Alaska Peninsula, while Bent and his party visited the Pribilof Islands and went thence north to St. Matthew and Hall islands. They passed the famous volcanic island, Bogoslof, swarming with colonies of Pallas's Murre. They reached Nome July 11, where the party remained collecting for a week, when Bent and McKechnie returned to Seattle, leaving Beck to continue the work there till September. By the middle of July about 1000 birds had been collected, with Beck and Wetmore still in the field.

WE ARE indebted to Mr. E. A. Goldman of the Bureau of Biological Survey for the following statement of progress in the Biological Survey of the Panama Canal Zone (see *antea*, p. 152), from which it appears that the field work has been practically finished. Mr. Goldman reports as follows:

"On December 22, 1910, I sailed from New York for Panama where I was engaged until the latter part of June on the Biological Survey of the Canal Zone which is being carried on by the Smithsonian Institution.

Landing at Cristobal in the Canal Zone, December 28, I proceeded to Culebra, the administrative headquarters for the construction of the Panama Canal. The survey received the active assistance of the Isthmian Canal Commission, and through the courtesy of the Chairman I was assigned comfortable quarters at Gatun. This point was at once chosen as the most favorable base for work in the Gatun Lake area, in which it seemed especially important to secure representative natural history collections before further biological changes incident to the canal construction had taken place. From this convenient base, where my Costa Rican assistant usually remained to prepare specimens, daily excursions were made into the surrounding country, or to more distant points along the line of the Panama Railroad. The Chagres River and some of its tributaries were explored by canoe, and in March an overland trip was made from the Pacific coast into the mountains near the headwaters of the river. The latter part of May and part of June were spent at Porto Bello, on the north coast, and in the mountains near.

"The field work of the season resulted in a collection of nearly 2500 birds and mammals, and other material for use in a general report on the fauna of the region.

"Other members of the survey — Dr. S. E. Meek, Mr. S. F. Hildebrand, Dr. E. A. Schwartz, Mr. August Busck and Mr. W. R. Maxon — have also returned and report good success in their respective branches of the work. Mr. Henry Pittier expects to continue botanical work in the field until about the first of December."

THE British Ornithologists' Union Expedition to New Guinea has been given up, owing to the impossibility of reaching the snowfields by the supposed most advantageous route, and the exploring party has returned to England. Its collection of 2300 skins of New Guinea birds has reached the South Kensington Museum, together with 200 bird skins collected in Borneo and about 450 obtained in Ceram.

ACCORDING to a recent announcement in 'The Emu' (X, Dec., 1910, p. 155) the name of the Australasian Ornithologists' Union has been changed, to Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union, thus obviating any possible confusion in the use of the initials "A. O. U." for two organizations of similar character, one in North America, the other in Australia.

WE learn from 'The Ibis' (July, 1911, p. 580) that Lord Bradbourne and Mr. Charles Chubb, of the Zoölogical Department of the British Museum, have undertaken the preparation of a new work on the Birds of South America. "When completed it will consist of sixteen volumes of quarto size illustrated by coloured plates drawn by Grönvold. The first volume will contain a List of the Birds of South America. This is well advanced. Volume II, containing the first portion of the general

work, will be issued early in 1912, and subsequent volumes at intervals of about nine months, each volume consisting of about 300 pages and of from 25 to 30 plates."

AT THE Annual General Meeting of the British Ornithologists' Union held May 10, 1911, it was voted: "That the Committee [=Council] consider it desirable that a new edition of the Union's List of British Birds be prepared, and that a Special Committee be appointed with a view to preparing the same." It was further voted that the President (F. Du Cane Godman), the Editors (P. L. Sclater and A. H. Evans), and the Secretary (J. Lewis Bonhote), Mr. W. R. Ogilvie-Grant, Mr. H. E. Dresser, Mr. W. Eagle-Clark, and Dr. N. F. Ticehurst, be requested to act on this Committee." The original B. O. U. 'List of British Birds' was published in 1883, three years before the first edition of the A. O. U. Check-List was issued, or twenty-eight years ago. The new edition doubtless will be awaited with great interest not only by British ornithologist, but by ornithologists at large.

A COMMITTEE of the Linnæan Society of New York has recently taken over the work of tagging birds for future identification as an aid in studying the migrations and other movements of birds, and in further prosecution of the work has issued the following explanatory circular:

New York, September 18, 1911.

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE A. O. U.:

You are probably aware of the existence of the AMERICAN BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION, which was organized in 1909 to encourage the marking of individual wild birds for the purpose of recording accurate data on their movements. The method employed is the placing of inscribed metal bands on the legs of any birds, young or old, that can be captured unharmed, and setting them free again with the realization that if ever the bird should be recovered a definite knowledge of its travels would be obtained.

The great value and ultimate possibilities of the scheme have been well set forth in the reports already published (*Auk*, XXVI, April, 1909, pp. 137-143, and *Auk*, XXVII, April, 1910, pp. 153-168); and great credit must be accorded the Committee formerly in charge for the splendid results achieved. The members of that Committee, however, by reason of pressure of other duties, and of being distantly separated from one another, have been unable of late to give the attention they desired to the American Bird Banding Association, and have expressed a wish to have this work placed in other hands. The Linnæan Society of New York, having the advantage of a centralized membership, and of the American Museum of Natural History as a bureau for the return and keeping of records, tendered its services, which were accepted.

Only by the coöperation of a large number of ornithologists in the task of bird marking can real advance ever be made in solving many of the

commonest questions of bird migration; the efforts of a few can never avail much. We are therefore endeavoring to interest all bird lovers in the importance of the work. The limited funds secured by the former Committee have been almost exhausted, and we estimate that the sum of \$500 should be raised at once. This will place the affairs of the Association on a substantial basis and enable the work to be pushed as its scientific importance demands, and as it is already being pushed in many countries of Europe.

We believe that you appreciate the value of the work we have undertaken, and we appeal to you for your coöperation and for a contribution to the fund.

Please make checks payable to Howard H. Cleaves, Secretary-Treasurer, and mail to Public Museum, New Brighton, New York City.

Respectfully yours,

Committee in charge of Bird Banding	{	WILLIAM WRIGHT GRANT.
		CLINTON G. ABBOTT.
		HOWARD H. CLEAVES, Sec'y-Treas.
		Public Museum, New Brighton, N. Y.

THE CRITICISM has repeatedly been made that the present volume of 'The Auk' does not conform strictly to the third edition of the Check-List, in respect to the use of trinomials for *all* subspecies. In almost all cases the Editor has followed the preference of the contributors as indicated in their manuscripts, believing that no ambiguity would result where the accompanying vernacular name and the geographical area concerned render it evident that only the eastern form of a group of subspecies can be intended. In the case of the Robin, Bluebird, Song Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Tree Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Meadowlark, Purple Martin, Cardinal, Yellow Warbler, the various species of Wren (House, Winter, Carolina, Bewick's, etc.), Chickadee, and in a great number of other instances, it seems needless, not to say pedantic, to burden the text with the full form, as in *Planesticus migratorius migratorius*, *Sialia sialis sialis*, *Melospiza melodia melodia*, *Passerella iliaca iliaca*, *Sturnella magna magna*, *Thryophilus ludovicianus ludovicianus*, etc., in casual references or informal mention of birds, or even in local lists, when the locality is in the Eastern or Middle States, where no other form of the species occurs. In the case of intermediate districts, or from the eastern border of the Plains westward, where two or more forms of a species may occur, it is obvious that the full form of the technical name should always be used, and of course in all systematic works and technical papers. This is an explanation, not a dictum nor a defense.

THE SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING of the National Association of Audubon Societies will be held at the American Museum of Natural History, New York City, October 31, 1911. In addition to the election of officers and

the transaction of other routine business, arrangements have been made for a 'Nature Study Symposium,' at which addresses will be given by prominent Nature Study teachers, with exhibits of specimens and of methods of instruction; also of artificial nesting-sites and other devices for the preservation and increase of birds.

THE TWENTY-NINTH STATED MEETING of the American Ornithologists' Union will be held at the Museum of the Academy of Natural Sciences at Philadelphia, beginning on the evening of November 13, 1911. The evening session will be a business meeting for the election of officers and members, and for the transaction of routine business. Tuesday and the following days of the meeting will be for the presentation and discussion of scientific papers and will be open to the public. Members intending to present communications should forward the titles to the Secretary, Mr. John H. Sage, Portland, Conn., so as to reach him not later than November 8, in order that the program of papers may be duly prepared.